

HOUSE BILL NO. 595

INTRODUCED BY C. JUNEAU

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT CLARIFYING THAT THE COUNTY GOVERNING BODY MUST CONSIDER GENDER AND RACIAL BALANCE WHEN APPOINTING ELECTION JUDGES; AUTHORIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TEMPORARY SATELLITE OFFICES OF THE COUNTY ELECTION ADMINISTRATOR FOR THE PURPOSE OF ALLOWING ONSITE ABSENTEE VOTING OUTSIDE THE COUNTY SEAT; AND AMENDING SECTIONS 13-4-101, 13-13-222, AND 13-13-225, MCA."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Section 13-4-101, MCA, is amended to read:

"13-4-101. Appointment of election judges. At least 30 days before the primary election in even-numbered years and subject to 2-15-108, the county governing body shall appoint three or more election judges for each precinct, one of whom must be designated chief judge."

Section 2. Section 13-13-222, MCA, is amended to read:

"13-13-222. Marking ballot before election day -- satellite office. (1) As soon as the official ballots are available pursuant to 13-13-205, the election administrator shall permit an elector to apply for, receive, and mark an absentee ballot before election day. The elector may apply for, receive, and mark an absentee ballot by appearing in person at the office of the election administrator or at a temporary satellite office provided for in subsection (2) and marking the ballot in a voting station area designated by the election administrator.

(2) Subject to subsection (3) and for the purpose of extending the convenience of voting under this section, the election administrator may establish temporary satellite offices in any location outside the county seat and within the county. If the election administrator establishes temporary satellite offices, the election administrator is encouraged to consider locating temporary satellite offices at nursing homes and convalescent centers and at venues where senior citizens live or otherwise congregate.

(3) Prior to establishing a temporary satellite office, the election administrator shall determine that establishing the satellite office is fiscally prudent and the governing body of the county shall approve establishing each satellite office.

~~(2)~~(4) The provisions of this chapter apply to voting under this section.

~~(3)~~(5) If the ballot is marked before the election administrator, the election administrator shall deal with it as provided in 13-13-231."

Section 3. Section 13-13-225, MCA, is amended to read:

"13-13-225. Special absentee election boards -- members -- appointment. (1) The election administrator shall designate and appoint a number of special absentee election boards as needed to serve in various places, including temporary satellite offices provided for in 13-13-222, to deliver ballots to electors who are entitled to vote by absentee ballot as provided in 13-13-229.

(2) In a partisan election, each special absentee election board must consist of two members, one from each of the two political parties receiving the highest votes in the state during the last preceding general election. Board members shall reside in the county in which they serve.

(3) A member of a special absentee election board may not be a candidate or a spouse, ascendant, descendant, brother, or sister of a candidate or of a candidate's spouse or the spouse of any one of these if the candidate's name appears on a ballot in the county."

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